

Lesson 1

The first lesson involves a discussion of the nature of penal institutions themselves. Working in 2's and 3's, students will create a [web, or concept map](#), brainstorming answers to these questions:

- How should prisons be built and what should they look like?
- Who should have to go to prison; what are some crimes worthy of prison?
- If prisons should change people (reform them), how should they do this?
- If prisons should punish people, how should they do this?

Once every group is working on a set of prison rules, the class should come together as a whole and each group should summarize its response. The teacher should create a general summary of the answers on the board, overhead, or computer projection.

Essay #1

Class should conclude with a writing assignment that challenges students to pick a side of the debate as to the purpose of prisons. In a thoughtfully written paragraph, students should articulate which side of this debate they support are they to punish or rehabilitate?

Punishment: Prisons should punish people who commit evil acts, and should be as harsh and unpleasant as possible.

Rehabilitation: Prisons are places to rehabilitate people, so treating them with respect and dignity will help teach them to not inflict harm on others again.